

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims, as follows:

Claims 1 - 18 (cancelled).

Claim 19 (new): A method comprising:

determining by a selected one of a plurality of control nodes, whether a client request to access an object is authentic, the determining being based upon whether a first certificate matches a second certificate, the first certificate being obtained from the client request, the second certificate being calculated based upon an encoded request from the client request;

if the selected one of the plurality of control nodes determines that the client request is authentic, determining, by the selected one of the plurality of control nodes, one of a plurality of storage nodes in which the object is located; and

retrieving the object from the one of the plurality of storage nodes.

Claim 20 (new): The method of claim 19, wherein:

the second certificate is based upon a first calculation and a second calculation, the first calculation comprising hashing an object fingerprint and a key to yield a first result, the second calculation yielding the second certificate and comprising hashing the first result and the key.

Claim 21 (new): The method of claim 20, further comprising:

generating, based upon the client request, the first certificate and the object fingerprint.

Claim 22 (new): The method of claim 19, wherein:

the selected one of the plurality of control nodes is selected by a level four switch.

Claim 23 (new): The method of claim 22, wherein:

the level four switch selects the selected one of the plurality of control nodes based on availability of the selected one of the plurality of control nodes to retrieve the object.

Claim 24 (new): The method of claim 20, wherein:

the object fingerprint identifies the object.

Claim 25 (new): The method of claim 19, wherein:

the determining of the one of the plurality of storage nodes is based upon examination by the selected one of the plurality of control nodes of a file table at the one of the plurality of control nodes.

Claim 26 (new): The method of claim 25, further comprising:

broadcasting by the selected one of the control nodes a broadcast request for the object to the plurality of storage nodes.

Claim 27 (new): An apparatus comprising:

a selected one of a plurality of control nodes to determine whether a client request to access an object is authentic, based upon whether a first certificate matches a second certificate, the first certificate being obtained from the client request, the second certificate being calculated based upon an encoded request from the client request; and

the selected one of the plurality of control nodes being capable of, if the selected one of the plurality of control nodes determines that the client request is authentic, determining one of a

plurality of storage nodes in which the object is located, and retrieving the object from the one of the plurality of storage nodes.

Claim 28 (new): The apparatus of claim 27, wherein:

the second certificate is based upon a first calculation and a second calculation, the first calculation comprising hashing an object fingerprint and a key to yield a first result, the second calculation yielding the second certificate and comprising hashing the first result and the key.

Claim 29 (new): The apparatus of claim 28, wherein:

the selected one of the plurality of control nodes is capable of generating, based upon the client request, the first certificate and the object fingerprint.

Claim 30 (new): The apparatus of claim 27, further comprising:

a level four switch to select the selected one of the plurality of control nodes.

Claim 31 (new): The apparatus of claim 30, wherein:

the level four switch is capable of selecting the selected one of the plurality of control nodes based on availability of the selected one of the plurality of control nodes to retrieve the object.

Claim 32 (new): The apparatus of claim 28, wherein:

the object fingerprint identifies the object.

Claim 33 (new): The apparatus of claim 27, wherein:

the selected one of the plurality of control nodes is capable of determining the one of the plurality of storage nodes based upon examination by the selected one of the plurality of control nodes of a file table at the one of the plurality of control nodes.

Claim 34 (new): The apparatus of claim 33, wherein:

the selected one of the control nodes is capable of broadcasting a broadcast request for the object to the plurality of storage nodes.